Epitome de Caesaribus 1.24 and Ovid's Exile

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> Cumque [sc. *Augustus*] esset luxuriae serviens, erat tamen eiusdem vitii severissimus ultor, more hominum, qui in ulciscendis vitiis, quibus ipsi vehementer indulgent, acres sunt. Nam poetam Ovidium, qui et Naso, pro eo, quod tres libellos *amatoriae artis conscripsit, exilio damnavit*. Quodque est laeti animi vel amoeni, oblectabatur omni genere spectaculorum, praecipue ferarum incognita specie et infinito numero.
>
> And although Augustus was a slave to lust, he was nonetheless most severe in punishing this same vice, as is the way in people, who are keen to punish the vices which they themselves are strongly attached to. For he *condemned to exile* the poet Ovid, who is also called Naso, on account of the fact that *he composed* three books *On the Art of Love*. And because he was of a cheerful and pleasant disposition, he delighted in every kind of spectacle, and especially beast shows featuring unknown species and vast numbers.

So the text of most editions of the *Epitome de Caesaribus*, 1.24-5, with one important exception, the 1504 Paris edition by Giovanni Giocondo.[1] The manuscripts of the *Epitome* (actually the *Libellus de vita et moribus imperatorum breviatus ex libris Sexti Aureli Victoris*) fall into three branches: M, whose earliest representative is Cod. Guelf. 84 Gud. lat. (α), ca. 825; β, Cod. Guelf. 131 Gud. lat., s. xi; and ι, Vat. lat. 3343, s ix, middle to second half.[2] Of these, only ι transmits the italicized text on Ovid's exile. In its place, M and β have a lacuna, that is, space left unfilled by the scribe, of a line and a half.

Such deliberate lacunae are not unknown in ninth-century manuscripts: the most well-known examples may be found in the two ninth-century manuscripts of Ammianus Marcellinus, both from Fulda, Vat. lat. 1812 and the fragments now at Kassel, both probably from the first half of the ninth century.[3] They can also be seen in the ninth century

manuscripts of the *Historia augusta*: one allegedly from northern Italy (BAV Pal. lat. 899, especially 154r-155v) and its apograph from Fulda (Bamberg, Msc. Class. 54, especially ff. 153r-154r).[4] More instances may be found in Lupus of Ferrières' copy of Cicero's *De oratore*, now in London, Harley 2736, from the second quarter of the ninth century (around 840, according to Bischoff).[5] Lupus was at Fulda in the 830s studying under Hrabanus Maurus, although we cannot know for certain if that is where the archetype of his Cicero came from. The lacunae, nonetheless, must have been in his archetype since they are also found in Avranches 238, another manuscript of the same text written around the same time or a little later from the Loire region.[6] Due to the connection with Lupus, and the fact that Hrabanus provides one of the earliest quotations from the *Orator*, it has been suggested that the archetype of the *De oratore* and *Orator* was at Fulda.[7] Accordingly, it is hardly surprising that we can place a copy of the *Epitome* at Fulda in the first decades of the ninth century, at a time just preceding the extant manuscripts. Frechulf of Lisieux used the *Epitome* extensively in his *Histories* completed in 829. Before 825, he was a monk at Fulda, and likewise a pupil of Hrabanus.[8]

This style of lacunae is used to preserve the amount of space needed to supplement the text from another manuscript, if one could be found, and seems to represent a distinctively ninth-century practice. Scribes were trained to write as much as they could be sure of, even if they were only meaningless sequences of letters, so that nothing legible in the archetype would be lost. Of the examples above, only Cicero survives entire in a separate manuscript tradition. Hence, in that case we can know what the lacunae should contain. An example from Harley 2736, f. 66rb (2.66, where the lacuna contains *venalium ut quisquis*):

mines similes$\overline{\text{ee}}$ suror$\overline{\text{u}}$

[line left blank]

optime graecesciret.ita

Another, example from f. 62r (*De oratore* 2.59, where the lacuna contains *–dit vehementius risimus*):

paulū etiā degestu addi

[line left blank]

ex hocgenere·ē·illarosci

The obvious textual implication of the lacuna in the *Epitome* is that M and β descend from a common archetype from Fulda, which is different from the archetype of ι. Unfortunately, the text does not bear this out: affiliations of Mι against β and βι against M are just as common as Mβ against ι. A very brief selection:

1.7 provinciarum Mι] provincias β

1.26 Nolae Mβ] nolo ι

5.9 pilleis Mι] paliis β

13.10 effatam βι] affatam M

16.12 vitae Mι] autem β

22.6 cavillo M] villo βι

39.3 charausio Mι] chamusio β

40.15 agrariis Mι] egregiis β

Certain readings point to a tripartition in the stemma:

2.7 incidere M] incedere β incidere vel incessere ι

3.5 incestum e choro ι] incestum choro M incestu moechorum β

11.2 belloque M] bello β bellique ι

12.8 quod M] qui β quia ι

14.1 et facetus M] et factus β effectus ι

24.4 deseri se M] desereret β deserissem et ι

Radical contamination is certainly possible, but since the whole point of marking lacunae in this fashion is to supplement with the aid of other codices, it seems very unlikely that the scribes of α, the other M codices, and β would not have supplemented if they had had access to ι or its parent. Rather, we should simply follow the evidence: the stemma is tripartite, and the text of 1.24 in ι is not archetypal.

There are a number of indications against the supplement's authenticity. It is too short for the line and a half lacuna indicated in the other manuscripts, and the extremely abrupt transition into the next sentence is jarring. Giovanni Giocondo's edition (1504) is the only early edition not based on a descendent of ι (but rather on γ, Medic. plut. 66,39, s. XII, an M manuscript), and so he had no access to the supplement. Instead he prints:

> Nam et poetam Ovidium (qui et Naso) pro eo quod tres libellos de arte amandi ediderat, quodque esset laeti animi vel amoeni, in exilium misit. Oblectaba<t>ur omnium generum spectaculorum, praecipue ferarum incognita specie et infinito numero.
>
> For he sent the poet Ovid (who is also called Naso) into exile on account of the fact that produced three books *On the Art of Love* and because he was of a cheerful and pleasant disposition. He delighted in every kind of spectacle, and especially beast shows featuring unknown species and vast numbers.

No editor has given Giocondo a second glance, and it would be too bold to simply adopt his text. His rewriting, however, does diagnose the problem with the jarring transition to the following line. The fact that his supplement is almost identical in content to that of ι, *de arte amandi ediderat . . . in exilium misit* to *amatoriae artis conscripsit exilio damnavit*, indicates

simply how obvious and natural ι's supplement is. Due to an historical accident – Lorenzo Astemio's edition based on a late Italian descendant of ι appeared in the same year as Giocondo's and went on to become the standard text – editors have uncritically assumed the authority of ι's tradition.

ι has an activist scribe, and consequently its readings must be treated with extreme caution. We have no access to what he was thinking, but the evidence of the text he wrote indicates both negligence and manipulation. The example at 2.7 cited above (*incidere vel incessere*) suggests an unfortunate tendency to incorporate glosses. Another passage confirms this:

10.8 cavit] cavit vel concessit ι

We can see the same thing in 5.7 where at two points ι inserts a proper name into the text for clarity:

5.7 quondam] quondam Nero ι

eunucho] eunucho Sporo ι

He also inserts other words:

9.2 hostis] hostis sui ι

48.15 monuit] monuit ut ι

At one point, he writes two alternative readings together, and then deletes the wrong one:

10.4 nullo vexato] nonnullis vexatis nullo vexato (*del.* nullo vexato) ι

A similar phenomenon can be observed in an anecdote about Augustus' habit of reciting the Greek alphabet to calm down (*Epit. de Caes.* 48.14-15):

> Habuitque [*sc.* Theodosius] e natura, quod Augustus a philosophiae doctore; qui cum vidisset eum facile commoveri, ne asperum aliquid statueret, monuit, ubi irasci coepisset, quattuor atque viginti Graecas litteras memoria recenseret, ut illa concitatio, quae momenti est, mente alio traducta parvi temporis interiectu languesceret.

habuitque a natura] habuit de linio vel quae natura ι

And Theodosius possessed by nature what Augustus learned from his teacher of philosophy. For when the teacher saw that he was easily roused, he advised him, in order to avoid decreeing something harsh, to recite the twenty four letters of the Greek alphabet, whenever he started to get angry, so that the feeling of a moment would soften as his mind came around in a short interval of time.

The addition of ι is a garbled incorporated gloss whose precise meaning is beyond recovery, but which almost certainly does not contain authentic ancient material.[9] The story in Plutarch identifies the teacher as Athenodorus – a fact that does not help us recover what ι is trying to relate.[10] At another point, a marginal *causa*-gloss seems to have intruded into the text and replaced the genuine reading:

1.12 maioris emolumenti spe] maioris emolumenti causa ι

Finally, when the scribe of ι did not understand the text, he was not beyond what looks like simple invention:

5.6 Galba Hispaniae proconsul] Galba in Hispania procul ι

This is nothing short of tampering. Perhaps not knowing what a proconsul was (which admittedly may have been abbreviated in the archetype; I have seen it written *proc*), the scribe seems to have conjectured *procul* and then changed the preceding *Hispaniae* to *in Hispania* to make it work. In short, we have no good reason to trust the scribe of ι; we should not construct the stemma on the basis of ι's idiosyncrasies; and we should never accept ι against Mβ without extraordinarily good reasons.

The strongest argument against this thesis is that there seems to be knowledge of ι's supplement outside the direct tradition, in Frechulf and Landolfus Sagax. Frechulf writes

(II.1.10): *Quibus diebus Ouidius poeta in exilio diem obiit, qui ab Augusto sene dampnatus fuerat propter libros Amatoriae quos conposuerat* ("In those days, the poet Ovid died in exile, for he had been condemned by the elderly Augustus because of the books he had written *On the Art of Love*,"). The wording betrays the fact that Frechulf is following Jerome and not the *Epitome* here (*chron.* 2033): *Ovidius poeta in exilio diem obiit.* The continuation shares almost nothing in common with the *Epitome*; hence, Frechulf, who did not generally tend toward paraphrase, was not using it at this point in his *Histories*, but was simply inserting the same idea as that found in ι's supplement. This solves a small mystery around Frechulf's use of the *Epitome*. Michael Allen has noted that, while Frechulf's text is often closest to β, on the basis of the supplement at 1.24, Frechulf must have known ι as well.[11] But if Frechulf did not know the supplement, and was not using the *Epitome* at all in II.1.10, then there is no need for Frechulf to have seen ι or a lost relation of it.

Landolfus Sagax presents a different case (VII): *pro eo quod tres libellos artis amatorie scripserat, inrevocabili damnavit exilio* ("on account of the fact that he had written three books of the art of love, he was condemned to irrevocable exile").[12] This is much closer to ι's supplement, even though once again almost every word is either different or in a different position, *artis amatorie* rather than *amatoriae artis*, *scripserat* rather than *conscripsit*, *damnavit exilio* rather than *exilio damnavit*, with the colourful addition of *inrevocabili*. Landolfus' source is the paraphrase of the *Epitome* made in Italy in the tenth century (1.26, p. 243 Festy): *pro eo quod tres libros de arte amatoria scripsit, inrevocabili damnavit exilio.* The paraphrase shares some idiosyncrasies with ι, which is the source of the later Italian tradition of the *Epitome*.[13] At some point after the ninth century, a copy of ι must have been brought to Italy, where in the fourteenth century it produced a half a dozen copies. Such a copy may well have been contaminated already from M and β. It is likely that the

paraphrase was made from one it or one of its earlier lost descendants. When ι itself reached Italy is not clear, although by the sixteenth century it was in the library of Fulvio Orsini.[14]

Since the archetype of the tradition of the *Epitome* is not the source of ι's anecdote, it must have come from the medieval commentary tradition to Ovid.[15] Unfortunately, we have no extant Ovidian scholia or commentaries as old as ι. From the following centuries, however, we find a wealth of cognate material. One of the earliest pieces we have, a short introduction to the *Amores* in an eleventh-century manuscript (St. Gall. 864), mentions how the *Ars amatoria* got the poet into trouble with Augustus: *accusatus erga Augustum de amatoria arte, unde omnes Romanae mulieres errant contaminatae* ("an accusation was levelled against him to Augustus concerning the *Art of Love*, by which all the women of Rome were corrupted").[16] A twelfth-century comment makes much the same point: *librum fecerat De amatoria arte in quo iuvenes docuerat matronas decipiendo sibi allicere, et ideo offensis Romanis dicitur missus esse in exilium* ("he produced a book on *The Art of Love*, in which he taught young men how to attract married women by deception, and so, having offended the Romans, he is said to have been sent into exile").[17] A thirteenth-century manuscript puts it even more succinctly: *Artis amatoriae causa Ovidius ab Augusto dampnari* ("on account of the *Art of Love*, Ovid was condemned by Augustus").[18] We have some evidence, however slight, that this anecdote has roots in the earlier medieval period, since it is found in the *accessus* to the earliest manuscript (late twelfth-century) of Ovid's *Ibis*: *Iste* [sc. *Ibis*] *vero accusarat Ovidium de uxore Augusti similiter de libro amatorio; quibus causis missus est in exilium* ("Ibis had made an accusation against Ovid concerning Augustus' wife, and likewise concerning *The Art of Love*; for these reasons he was sent into exile").[19] By itself, that would mean nothing, but some of the scholia in this manuscript must go back to unique ancient material, since they provide genuine references to Callimachus.[20] Much in the scholia, however, is certainly not ancient, and the form of the *accessus* can hardly predate the

eleventh century.[21] Hence, it must remain an open question whether the anecdote about the exile comes from contemporary Ovidian scholarship or earlier medieval sources. Regardless, however, it is not possible for a whole biographical and exegetical tradition to spring up suddenly, fully formed, with no earlier sources or analogues. Rather the lack of Carolingian scholarship on Ovid should be attributed to the general paucity of early manuscripts of Ovid (in contrast to Horace, Virgil, Juvenal, Persius, and others); had more Carolingian manuscripts survived, it is more than likely that one of them would have contained paratextual material. Frechulf provides unexpected support for this thesis, since his version (*ab Augusto sene dampnatus fuerat propter libros Amatoriae quos conposuerat*) is very close in wording to some of our later versions, and he tends to tamper only slightly with the wording of his sources.[22]

The final point against the authenticity of the supplement is perhaps the most compelling and important: it provides the only ostensibly ancient witness to the notion that Ovid was exiled because of the *Ars.* It is beyond suspicious that our only ancient source for this theory is transmitted by the slenderest of lines – one early manuscript in a tradition with a respectable diffusion – and that this same theory would go on to become one of the standard pieces of the medieval biographical tradition. Instead, we should examine what is transmitted in M and β, that is, the reading of the archetype (I present the format from α, Cod. Guelf. 84 Gud. lat, f. 67v):

> dulgent acres sunt. Nam poetam Ovidium, qui et Naso, pro eo
> quod tres libellos
> [line left blank]
> quodque laeti animi vel amoeni, oblectabatur omni genere
> spectaculorum, praecipue ferarum incognito specie et infini-

What we can glean from the remains of this passage is that Augustus did something to Ovid on account of *tres libelli*. It is very likely that the something was indeed his exile, since Jerome mentions it in his *Chronicon* and it has been established that Jerome and the *Epitome* are drawing on the same source.[23] The next writer to mention Ovid's exile after the *Epitome* and Jerome is Sidonius, writing in the 460s (*carm.* 23.158-61):

> Et te carmina per libidinosa
> notum, Naso tener, Tomosque missum,
> quondam Caesareae nimis puellae,
> ficto nomine subditum Corinnae?
>
> And [why should I sing of] you, tender Ovid, famous for your lusty poems and sent off to Tomi, you who were once too devoted to a Caesarian girl, under the assumed name Corinna?

This is not the occasion to explore the prosopographical riddle these allusive lines leave: at the very least, Sidonius is implying that Ovid's poems to Corinna had something to do with his exile.[24] This passage occurs in a wide ranging catalogue of Latin authors, and we should certainly not credit Sidonius with original research into biographical clues hidden Ovid's poetry. He is allusive simply because he is sure that his dedicatee, Consentius *iunior*, knows the story already. Reading backward from Sidonius it seems more likely that the *tres libelli* of the *Epitome* are the *Amores*, in which Corinna figures, and not the *Ars*.[25]

What precise implication the author of the *Epitome* was drawing is lost. The reason ninth-century scribes left lacunae in manuscripts was in hope that another copy wold turn up which would allow them to fill in the gaps. Our ninth-century manuscripts of Ammianus, littered as they are with lacunae, are a poignant testimony to their (ultimately vain) hope that another manuscript of the *Res gestae* would come into their hands. So too with this passage

of the *Epitome*. And the same verdict as that pronounced upon large parts of Ammianus must be applied to our earliest testimony for the cause of Ovid's exile: lost, probably forever – unless, of course, another source is found.

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[1] The text comes from the edition of M. Festy (1999), which I have followed throughout. I have also relied on Festy's manuscript collations, spot checking some instances where manuscript images were available to me. I also use Festy's manuscript sigla, which have been partially taken over from Pichlmayr's Teubner. In general, editors should be lauded for sticking with the sigla of their predecessors; in this case, however, where Pichlmayr did precisely the opposite of what has become the common practice (using lower case Greek letters for individual manuscripts, and upper-case Roman letters for hyparchetypes), surely it is time to start from scratch, as T. D. Barnes (2002, 25) has suggested. For discussion of ancient and modern opinions for Ovid's exile, see Thibault 1964. This translation and all others used here are my own.

[2] For 84 Gud. lat, see Bischoff 1998-2014, 3: no.7312 (the manuscript is available online at the *Wolfenbüttel Digital Library*); for 131 Gud. lat., see the catalogue entry by G. Milchsack, in von Heinemann 1913, no. 4435 (the catalog is available online at the *Wolfenbüttel Digital Library*); for the Vat. lat. 3343, see Bischoff 1998-2014, 3: no. 6876.

[3] On the relationship of the manuscripts, see L. D. R. in Reynolds 1983, 6-8, with Robinson 1936, 118-40. Currently Gavin Kelly and I are undertaking a re-examination of the evidence. Both manuscripts may be consulted online, the Fuldensis at the *Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana* and the Hersfeldensis at *ORKA – Open Repository Kassel.*

[4] The Palatine manuscript may be consulted online at *Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana* and the Bamberg at the *Kaiser-Heinrich-Bibliothek* project. I have my doubts as to the Italian origin of Pal. lat. 899.

[5] The whole manuscript text is published in facsimile in Beeson 1930. The lacunae are discussed at pp. 21-7. See Bischoff 1998-2014, 2: no. 2454.

[6] This manuscript can be found online at the *Bibliothèque virtuelle des manuscrits médiévaux*. See Bischoff 1998-2014, 1: no. 183 (second third of the ninth century).

[7] See M. W., R. H. R., and M. D. R. in Reynolds 1983, 103-4.

[8] Allen 2002, 1:13*-16*.

[9] Early modern commentators on this passage, whose texts were derived from Astemio's 1504 edition, tried hard to make some sense out of this gloss, transferring it from Thoedosius to Augustus, and then reading *Livio* for *linio*, for example. Such comments can be conveniently perused in the Valpy variorum edition, Harles 1829: 2:851-2. I wonder if the origin lies in the incorporation of a marginal gloss which mistakenly identified *Livius* or even *Plinius* as the source of the story.

[10] Plut. *Mor.* 207c: ὁ Ἀθηνόδωρος εἶπεν, ὅταν ὀργισθῇς, Καῖσαρ, μηδὲν εἴπῃς μηδὲ ποιήσῃς πρότερον ἢ τὰ εἴκοσι καὶ τέτταρα γράμματα διελθεῖν πρὸς ἑαυτόν.

[11] Allen 2002 1:201*-202*.

[12] Crivellucci, 1912-13, 1:191.

[13] For example, at 9.2, ι adds *sui* after *hostis* and the paraphrase has *inimici sui*; and 9.3, where ι misunderstands the text's *a iocularibus*, 'by wags', inserting *dictis*, while the paraphrase transmits *iocularia . . . verba*.

[14] de Nolhac 1887, 276-7; Festy 1999, lxix.

[15] For the medieval tradition of Ovid commentary, see the material in Przychocki 1911); Ghisalberti 1946; Elliot 1980; and Coulson 1987. A finding aid to manuscript material was published by Coulson and Roy 2000. A very incomplete and uncritical collection of the medieval sources on Ovid's exile is in Thibault 1964, 24-7.

[16] Ghisalberti 1946, 12n.

[17] Clm 19475, printed in Ghisalberti 1946, 32n.

[18] Paris 7994, s. xiii, printed in Ghisalberti 1946, 46.

[19] Cambridge, Trinity Coll. 1335 (ed. Ellis, p. 43).

[20] See Cameron 2004, 180-3

[21] The classic article on the *accessus* is Quain 1945.

[22] This can be seen at a glance in Allen's superb edition of Frechulf (2002), where the words of his sources are printed in smaller type.

[23] See, most recently, Burgess 2005.

[24] *Pace* Hexter 1995, 43-4.

[25] Hence, we ought not with Peter Green, attribute this theory to "monkish fantasizing" (1982, 218). Sidonius himself, of course, was no monk; the author of the *Epitome* was even less likely to have been one.